

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY OF TABLIGH JAMAAT IN MEDAN NORTH SUMATERA

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ABSTRACT

Tabligh Jamaat in the city of Medan is one of the groups which is different from any other groups; conducting specific Islamic preaching or da'wah by enticing Muslims residing around a mosque for congregational prayers. This activity is one of the implementation namely khuruj teachings they refer to. Practicing khuruj is a form of which they leave their family for some days, weeks and even months, and consequently it seems lacking responsible to their family needs. Hence, this study focused on tracking real understanding of Tabligh Jamaat on family responsibility. The purpose of this study was to assess and explain the understanding Tabligh Jamaat responsibility on their family in Medan based on Islamic law perspective. The research results show that the Tabligh Jamaat perceps that providing a living cost for the family is obligatory for a husband. In this sense, a living cost is divided into two kinds; the first is Jahir living in the forms of clothing, food and shelter. The second is mental living covering religious values of monotheism, jurisprudence, morality and some other points to elevate the family dignity.

Keywords: *Khuruj, jahir, living cost, responsibility.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of religious activities in Medan lately is a social phenomenon that quite interesting to observe. The various communities show their enthusiasm upon the religious organizations in spreading the mission of Islam. Nevertheless, one of the religious organization is easy to spot because of their physical performance, mainly in regard to use religious symbolization which is in general different from most of other Islamic organizations.

Along with the dynamics of society and the continual growing demands of the times, preaching, as an effort of socialization and internalization of Islamic teachings, is also progressing in matters of method, strategy and model. Historically, the development of preaching in Medan especially is performed

by religious social organizations, such as al-Washliyah, Muhammadiyah, Nahdhatul Ulama, al-Ittihadiyah, Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi, Hizbut Tahrir (HTI), Majelis Tafsir of the Qur'an (MTA) and Jamaat Tabligh (JT).

The style of these religious organizations, one and another are diverse. Some of them are political struggle oriented and some others are to purification movement and revivalism, Qur'anic reinterpretation, and social and education movement. While, the most phenomenal one and well-known lately is an organization namely Tabligh Jamaat with unisex preaching movement.

Based on the fact found by the researchers some families left in time of *khuruj* do not have enough money to support their living. Some families of Tabligh Jamaat have to take loans to meet their livings and even some of the children have got hindrances in the

schools as they do not have enough attention from their parents. All of this is caused by the lack of money left by the husbands in time of *khuruj*. In this regard, as stated by Abu Muhammad and Ahmad Abduh (2008) that many families are abandoned and unnoticed because of *khuruj* activities, and the main issue is the money left by husbands is not enough to meet all the family's needs (Abu Muhammad and Ahmad Abduh, 2008).

On the other hand, everyone should understand that it is not easy to be a good husband in which among his shoulders the responsibility to support proportionally their family's needs whether of those of physical or spiritual needs. In this relation Allah said in Surah an-Nisa 34 which is the meaning as following: "Men are in charge of women, because Allah has preferred some of them (men) on some others (female), and because they (men) have spent out of their possessions" (Quranic verses).

The verse above shows that Allah asserted the husbands to give a living cost to their family. They are to meet the family's needs physically and spiritually altogether. While, Tabligh Jamaat perceive a person will be considered as follower if he has already participated in *khuruj*. The *khuruj* is an obligation and is the culmination of the Tabligh Jamaat's teachings. In this regard, it is compulsory to all members of this organization to practice the *khuruj* such as performed by members of Tabligh Jamaat in Medan. In this case, members tend to ignore most of their family responsibilities, and therefore are not in accordance with the understanding of Islamic law regarding the cost of living provided by the husband for the family left behind.

Based on above illustrations, it is certainly interesting to study furthermore regarding the Islamic organization namely Tabligh Jamaat on understanding Islamic law in relation to the family responsibility in Medan. So far, family neglect is quite problematic in most families of members of the Tablighi Jamaah especially regarding *huruj*. This practice indeed is well known, but as far as the researcher knows there are no specific studies on this issue and no book has ever been written about this, either by members of Tabligh Jamaat or by some other people.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This is qualitative field research, focusing on observation and data collection from the field through interview session. The data source consists of two parts. The first is primary data taken directly from objects in the field and this data is the main source of information to be obtained. This primary data was crucial and attained through interview session.

The second is secondary data and in this study the authors were more inclined to data such as the important Jamaah Tabligh documents, books made as guidelines for the Jamaah Tabligh members, and the bulletins released by Tabligh Jamaat organization. The key informants were also leaders (*syura*) of Tablighi Jamaah Medan. This secondary data was taken from other parties, which was not taken directly from the object of research. Secondary data consisted of books written by third parties related to Tabligh Jamaat, the viewpoint of relatives, and neighbors of Tabligh Jamaat and also religious leaders.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

a. Definition of Responsibility

Responsibility, according to General Indonesian Dictionary, is a state of obligation to bear everything; obliged to bear any form of obligation or to give responsibility and take the consequence of responsibility.

Various types of responsibilities are as follows:

1. Responsibility and Individual
2. Responsibility and freedom
3. Social Responsibility
4. Responsibility towards others.
5. Responsibility and risk

b. Responsibility of Husband

The *mahzab* scholars agree that there are three forms of living that are mandatory for a husband to fulfill, are food, clothing and shelter. They also agree that the size of living

depends on the state of both parties. If the husband and wife are financially strong then the livings are to be adjusted according to their strong finance and they are poor, then again, the living should be adjusted according to their financial standing. Basically a living cost must be given by a husband to his wife. It is based on the Qur'an, Hadith and Ijma (agreement of scholars or ulama). To clarify the legal basis of this, the writers will present some verses, *hadith* and *ijma* 'as follows:

The commandments of Allah Swt in the Quran as following: "men are in the leaders of women, because Allah has preferred some of them (men) on some others (female), and because they (men) have spent out of their possessions. Therefore, the virtuous woman, must be obedient to God take care of her chastity when the husband is away because God has kept (them) women whom you fear of their disobedience (faithless), therefore you must admonish them and send them to their beds, and beat them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Allah is Most High, Most Great" (An-Nisa':34).

The verses above, the scholars agree that *al-mas'ul* (responsibility) that is intended on living is the obligation of the husband. Therefore, this verse becomes obligatory rule that the living for the wife and family is to be the responsibility of the husband. In the Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad Saw. said as in a story narrated by Imam Muslim from the source of the companion Jabir bin Abdullah: "The Messenger of Allah said: "Dinar (treasure) which ye spend in the way of Allah and dinar (treasure) which ye give to a female slave, and the dinar which you donate to the poor and the dinar you spend to your family; so the greatest reward is the one you spend for your family" (Narrated by Muslim No.1661).

Another Hadith was from 'Aisha RA that Messenger of Allah said: "Hind actually said that Abu Sufyan (her husband) is stingy. He did not provide enough income for me and my son, unless I take from him without his knowledge. Then Rasulullah answered: Take what is sufficient for you and your child in a way that is *ma'ruf*" (as enough as possible). (Narrated by Al Jama'ah).

Imam Ash-Syaukaniy comments in his book namely al-Authar Nail that the above hadith became a rule, the obligation for the

husband to provide his wife and children (his family), and this is already a consensus among the Mujtahid (the law experts). In this regard, the livings to be provided by the husband are as follows:

- a. Food and clothing
- b. Dwelling Place
- c. Education of children
- d. Medical Treatment Cost
- e. Spiritual Living
- f. Spiritual needs.

c. Tabligh Jamaat Profile in Medan

Tabligh Jamaat is a group of Muslims who look exclusive, dressed like the tradition of the Arabs with long cassock (mostly white), white hat called "lobe" wear and lengthened beard. They usually stay in the mosque visited for four days or more for preaching. They conduct *jaulah*, visiting houses located around the mosque and inviting the Muslims around the mosque to pray in congregation. After the congregational prayers one of them give lectures which is mostly based on a book named *Himpunan Fadillah* by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Al-Kandahlawi. It was translated into Indosiesian. During staying in the mosque they perform religious activities such as *zikir* or remembrance, tahajud, reading Qur'an and others as a way to get closer to Allah Swt.

Their religious activities will be intense in the mosque, and they almost spend 70% of their time to share their knowledge and understanding of religion to other people. In addition they also hold nightly astral conjunction or *ijtima* '(gathering), where in this activity will be a teacher (*muu'alim-ulama*) whether from local sources or abroad who is doing *khuruj*. The teacher used to present "*bayan*" (religious services) and also *ta'lim wa ta'alum* (teaching-learning process) in understanding religion. In other words, in *ijtima*, there will be invited preachers from as out sources who use to give lectures at the mosque during the congregation activities.

Concerning to *khuruj* session, the Tabligh Jemaat members who are still busy from their work and no time to perform *khuruj*, then they could conduct the *khuruj* three days a month.

For instance, they leave home on Friday afternoon after office hour till Monday morning and are not to back home; they could directly go to their work as they need not to forget to their work. They are supposed to be active in managing their time in this matter.

In this sense, *khuruj* session is compulsory and cannot be ignored. In this point they have to be sincere or *ikhlas*. Sincerity is embedded among the members of Tabligh Jamaat. Hence, they should never neglect the *khuruj* although some of them work as employees in restricted time of office hour. Therefore, they are suggested to find spare time for conducting *khuruj* and being loyal in carrying out for congregational activities.

Historically, Tabligh Jamaat Medan was introduced by an Indian, Muhammad Ilyas in 1970 and he was a father founder of Transnational Islamic Missionary Movement in 1926. The first entrance was the Islamiyah Hidayatul Mosque located at Jl. Gajah-Medan, whereas in long run to be the center of Tabligh Jamaat coordination for Medan and North Sumatra.

In this mosque, the members of Tabligh Jamaat conduct routinely gathering with the members come from various areas of North Sumatra or out of Sumatra such as from Papua, Aceh and others. Ustaz H. Badruddin Amir now is a leader of Tabligh Jamaat-Medan and called "*Amir*" or "*Syura*" and hence, he is responsible person to organize the *huruj* of *Tabligh Jamaat* members, especially to go to foreign countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and others.

The Tabligh Jamaat in Medan runs without organizational structure like other groups, however, their activities is not stagnant. There must be someone or the elder who is considered more experiences to coordinate the activities and it is will be referred to as an *Amir* or *Syura*. That is why their numbers of members cannot be known exactly even it is quite a lot in Medan and it could reach hundred and up.

Tabligh Jamaat in the city of Medan is not bounded by any streams or specific schools of *fiqh* and *thought*. The Tabligh Jamaat will accept anyone who ever willing to join the preaching or *dakwah* and invite people to the path of God. In addition to the Qura'nic verses or Hadith, the members are to preach

certain teachings known from both references. Nevertheless, they are also to teach the six points (six teachings) and one of the teachings is preaching or *dakwah* which is obligatory during conducting *khuruj*.

d. Terms to Conduct *Khuruj*

According to the *Tabligh Jamaat* teachings *khuruj* is obliged to all its members. It is to preach out for four months and once in a lifetime, or it may be conducted in 40 days in each year, three days for every month, or twice a week to settle from one mosque to another in different areas.

The *khuruj* for member of *Tabligh Jamaat* should meet the following terms:

1. Righteous intention: *Tabligh Jamaat* members who want to do *khuruj* must install the righteous intention meaning to have sincere intention merely a wish to seek the blessing of Allah swt. Righteous intention, and being sincere to preach and help the religion of Allah, will help a person to be facilitated by God. In all his affairs. They cite Quranic verse: Meaning: "O ye who believe, if you strive to defend Islam Allah will help you and affirm your steps" (Muhammad:7). If someone has already got a genuine intention to preach or convey religious messages then all the family matters are to be submitted to Allah swt, it is Allah swt who will keep and maintain his family. This refers to the events of Prophet Ibrahim who left his wife Siti Hajar with her child Ishmael in the barren desert (Mecca) and he returned after her son got adult. The Word of God: "O Our God, indeed I had put parts of my offspring in a valley that has no plants near the your house (Baitullah) the one respected, Oh our God (as such) that they establish the prayer, then make the hearts of some people tend to them and give them living of fruits, hopefully they are grateful" (Ibrahim:37). Although the natural conditions at the time was not conducive to human life, but it is Allah who helped to the survival of Siti Hajar with her son Ishmael as. Tabligh Jamaat members of Medan do a lot of *khuruj* to preach on *fi sabilillah* for weeks and some even leave their families for months. The practice done by Tabligh Jamaat

is identical to what was once done by the Prophet with nine wives, children and grandchildren, but the family did not prevent him from spreading the religion. The same thing ever conducted by the companions of the Prophet who left the family for some months to do Islamiyah preaching.

2. Having sufficient funds either for travel destination and living for the family; wives and children. Readiness for all the budgets should be told transparently before Syura or Amir. Points to be asked by Amir or Syura will be around the funds to be used for the travelling and the family left. All should be adjusted to the travelling condition covering the duration and destination. If the budget is not enough, the person concerned would be given another place according to the budget. This is based on the view that the family is not to be neglected as giving a living cost to the family is mandatory and if not will be considered sinful. Some other questions to be given by Amir are about the jobs and family.

3. Readiness costs and funds held for Tabligh Jamaat for those who will do *khuruj* session are delivered openly and in detail before Amir as he will ask about *amwal* (assets). In this sense, the issues is related to costs, meaning costs for during the trip and the cost to families left behind. All are adjusted to the length of *khuruj* areas that will be addressed. If funds are insufficient for the area that will be addressed, then he will look for another area corresponding to the amount of funds available. This is done to anticipate that families left behind are not neglected, because they think that providing for the family and if it is obligatory to displaced families so this is a mistake and is considered as sin. The Shura also will ask about families' *ahwal* (condition), their work and others associated with the pilgrims who will perform *khuruj*. In the implementation of this *khuruj*, Tabliqis group will form *tafaqqud*, it is a team whose task is to monitor the families of Tabligh Jamaat when performing *khuruj*. The team will visit the Tabligh Jamaat members' home when the husband is doing *khuruj*. If the *khuruj* is done for 40 days or months then the *tafaqqud* team will visit home once a week. The team will come and bring their wives.

The men will not enter the houses of the members who is doing *khuruj*. That is why they bring their wives to know more about the family' condition and if the fund is not enough there will be financial aids for them from the team. The members will usually help each other. The team will also see the health condition, security and some other things of the family left when the husband is doing *khuruj*. The visiting team aims to *determine* whether the living cost is enough or insufficient. If it is insufficient and the husband has not come home yet, then the living cost will be covered by the other members of Tabligh Jamaat. This is assumed as a manifestation of solidarity and mutual help among members of Jemaah Tabligh.

4. A case where family members of Tabligh Jamaat are displaced when the husband is away for *khuruj*, This is because of the husband is not eligible yet to do *khuruj* and he does not tell to Amir. Probably he is ashamed or his desire to do *khuruj* is higher than his capability. This case indicates that there is not coordination the husband with the Amir before doing *khuruj*.

5. A member of Tabligh Jamaat who wants to do *khuruj* should ask permission from his wife and he needs to explain for good understanding when the wife refuses or show an objection. The husband should give a good understanding that *khuruj* is obligatory as a demand of religion and hence, should be supported fully as it stands for preaching on religious matters.

e. Family Responsibility

1) Responsibility of Husband

As described above that a husband who wants do *da'wah* through *khuruj* has to cover his family's needs as they argue that providing a living cost for the family is obligatory even going for preach. Oppositely, it is mistaken ignoring the family's living cost. Based on interviews with Amir and some members of Tabligh Jemaat that providing a living cost for family is responsible and mandatory for husband to cover the family's needs during his *khuruj*.

The same result is also obtained from *Syuro* or *Amir* who states that providing a living cost for wife and children is obligatory and hence, Tabligh Jamaat does not allow its members to do *khuruj* if they are not able to provide a living cost for their families.

However, the researchers observed that some members of Tabligh Jamaat prioritize inner living, and it does not mean ignoring obligation to provide a *Jahir* service (financial) at all, but they are trying to gain ascetic life which means working merely for the needs. This ascetic attitude is to follow and imitate the Prophet Muhammad saw and his companions.

2) Inner Livelihood Issues

The inner living according to Tabligh Jamaat is a spiritual living form of understanding religious values that should be given to the wife and children. Religious values are cultivating the values of faith (*tauhid*), theology and *sharia* (laws) relating to obligatory things, optional obligation, prohibition, optional or permissibility. The inner living according to understanding of the Tabligh Jamaat is more important than living of *Jahir* form such as clothing, food and other outward nature. If this inner living is not met the needs, this is the cause of a household clutter and it causes to the house away from the blessings of Allah swt. Allah said in the Qur'an: "O ye who believe, guard yourselves and your families from a Fire of Hell (At-Tahrim: 6)

During the revelation of the verse above, Umar bin Khattab asked Rasulullah saw., the Messenger of God: "O Rasulullah we have kept ourselves, how to maintain our family? The Prophet said: "You prevent it from those prohibited by Allah and tell them to do what is commanded by Allah. That would prevent them from the fire of hell.

The biological relationship problems (*jima'*) to the wife is not an obligation. They argue that doing *jima'* to the wife is not an obligation. Husband could do *jima'* whenever he wants, and when the husband has the opportunity and ability. If the husband does not have the ability or do not have the opportunity to do so, then the wife is required to be patient. Here lies the role of the values

of faith that must be imparted to the wife. The Prophet says from Aby Zar's sources: "do *jima'* to your wife is charity. (H.R.Muslim).

The implementation of Tabligh Jamaat teachings in the city of Medan was impressed by researchers that some of its members ignore family's responsibility for months. However, they are still keeping Islamic doctrine normatively. In this sense that Islamic norm and *syari'ah* doctrine still inherent even if in its practice unconsciously influenced by reason (creativity), emotion (feeling) and will (intention) by which are quite high and excessive.

Indeed, when it is excessive it will cause to people's judgment of religion unreasonable. Leave their family for *khuruj* was assumed quite excessive and it resulted in the negligence of other obligations such as children's education and fathers' compassion. Moreover, the father's job as the source of economic support is lost. While for some Tabligh Jamaat members are willingly quit from their job because of doing *khuruj*. In this sense that living inner takes precedence over the *Jahir* livelihood.

The existence of Tabligh Jamaat in Medan city has a significant role to encourage Muslims to pray in congregation at the mosque. They do not feel offended if some do not follow them or even some give blasphemous remarks, because they are sure that carry on an obligation is a must.

4. CONCLUSION

Tabligh Jamaat in Medan city is a portrait of Tabligh Jamaat in Indonesia since 1970 and they directly go to the mosque of Hidayatul Islamiyah on Jl. Gajah. They percept that *khushu'* is an obligation of every member of Tabligh Jamaat should perfume the *khuruj* to leave the family. However, they still leave a living for the family, because they are of the view that giving a living for the family is obligatory. However, the inner living form of religious values is more important than the *Jahir* living such as in the form of food and clothing.

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